

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2006

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS HASKELL
 BELDEN
 O'CONNOR
 GABRIELS
 VANNESS
 F. THOMAS
 STEC
 GERAGHTY
 MERLINO

OTHERS PRESENT:

PAT BELAND, DIRECTOR - PARKS, RECREATION &
 RAILROAD
PAUL BUTLER, RECREATION FACILITIES MANAGER
WILLIAM LAMY, DPW SUPERINTENDENT
WILLIAM THOMAS, CHAIRMAN
PATRICIA NENNINGER, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY
 ATTORNEY
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
SUPERVISOR CAIMANO
AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Haskell called the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Committee to order at 1:30 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 17th meeting subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Beland, Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad, who distributed copies of his agenda to the Committee members. A copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Beland advised that Patricia Nenninger, Second Assistant County Attorney, was in attendance to address the first item of the agenda which pertained to the Bikeway Bridge spanning State Route 149. Ms. Nenninger began by explaining that the matter at hand was an old issue that needed to be resolved. She said that in 2002 when Route 149 was reconstructed, NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation) appropriated two pieces of property in which Warren County had interest. In one piece there was ownership interest and in the other was the license interest of the Bikeway Bridge, she added.

Ms. Nenninger stated that the appropriation had never been finalized and, as such, the property had not been conveyed. The reason for this was that the monies Warren County used to purchase the interest were Federal funds that flowed through New York State Parks Division, she apprised. Ms. Nenninger explained that in order for the property to be conveyed certain permissions must be obtained from both the Federal Government and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Ms. Nenninger said that when consulted, both parties had agreed that the property in question should be returned to Warren County; however, she noted, when NYSDOT was provided with this information they declined to re-convey the property.

Ms. Nenninger said that this had been an ongoing issue for several years and it had become clear that unless Warren County was willing to embark upon a lengthy and expensive challenge, they would not be able to accept conveyance of the properties. She added that if they were to accept

the conveyance it could be construed as a violation of the Federal funding grant agreement. Ms. Nenninger advised that after discussing the issue with Paul Dusek, County Attorney, they had agreed to recommend that the Committee rescind the resolution accepting the conveyance.

Ms. Nenninger stated that the first portion of the necessary resolution would state that there was \$2,000 in property value that would not be accepted if the conveyance were not finalized. Secondly, she said, the resolution would indicate that Warren County had a license to use the Niagara Mohawk property on which the Bikeway Bridge was located. The proposal to resolve this matter would be to advise the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation that there were \$600 in license interests available. If the Department agreed to pay the \$600 fee, the funds could be accepted and used for improvements to the Warren County Bikeway. Once this step was taken, she said, Warren County could then approach NYSDOT and explain that their licenses needed to be updated to include the parcel in case they did have some ownership interest. This would give Warren County the right to use the site formally in their licenses, Ms. Nenninger explained.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve Ms. Nenninger's request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 17th Board Meeting.

Ms. Nenninger left the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Proceeding to the second item of the agenda, Mr. Beland explained that he had received notification of the exact amount of snowmobile grant funding that would be received from New York State. He noted that previously, a resolution had been authorized to amend the Budget in the amount of \$32,619.88, which was the amount initially anticipated. Mr. Beland stated that the realized funds would be of a much lower amount, totaling only \$21,475.21; as such, he advised, the prior resolution must be amended to reflect the actual funds received.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to amend the County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$21,475.21 to reflect actual State Snowmobile grant funds, and refer same to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Haskell asked who the grant funds had been promised to and Mr. Beland replied that they would be forwarded to the Warren County Snowmobile Association to be split between the three participating Snowmobile Clubs based on mileage. Mr. Merlino stated that he had spoken with the Treasurer of the Warren County Snowmobile Association who was unaware of the amount of funds to be received. Mr. Beland stated that he would contact the Association to clear up any confusion with respect to the matter.

Mr. Beland advised that the third agenda item pertained to an internship program at the Up Yonda Environmental Education Center. He said that there was an intern from Penn State University working at Up Yonda, however, the intern was seeking housing. Mr. Beland stated that currently there were paid interns working both with and without housing. He said that in this instance a resolution was necessary to authorize an internship program for students which would include housing at the Facility.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November 17th Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes.

The fourth item of the agenda, Mr. Beland apprised, was a resolution request to transfer funds for the acquisition of the caboose. He noted that the transfer in the amount of \$25,000 had been approved at the DPW Committee meeting earlier, so no action was necessary.

Returning to the agenda, Mr. Beland explained that the fifth agenda item was an update on acquisition funding deadlines. He said that, with reference to the Riparius Station, in his last conversation with regard to the R.K. Hite property acquisition, he was notified that the proper paperwork was being forwarded to purchase the site. He noted that he was not up to date on the status of the Biondi property located in the Town of Hadley; Mr. Beland added that Biondi was still in the process of determining their relocation costs and site which must be approved on both the Federal and State levels prior to making a determination. He advised that he would keep the Committee apprised of the situation.

Mr. Belden asked what the anticipated acquisition costs of the Riparius Station were and Mr. Beland replied that \$120,000 was estimated. He said that 80% of the project costs would be supplied by New York State grant funds with Warren County providing the local share of 20%.

Mr. Haskell reminded the Committee that the caboose purchased had been used as a soft ice cream stand in the past. He suggested that Warren County partner with one of the business courses in place at ACC (Adirondack Community College) to continue its use as a vending stand for potential profits to Warren County.

Mr. Beland stated that the acquisitions paperwork would probably be received in early November and he asked if a special meeting could be called to authorize the necessary resolution for property acquisition prior to the November Board meeting. Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, advised Mr. Beland to contact her once the paperwork in question was received to schedule the meeting.

Returning to his agenda, Mr. Beland apprised that the sixth item pertained to a supplemental agreement with Clough, Harbour & Associates for the final design of the railway stations, contingent upon NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation) concurrence. He explained that the agenda included an email from Robert Hansen of NYSDOT which explained that the RABA (Revenue Aligned Budget Authority) funds appropriated for the railway stations must be used within four years or they would be lost. Mr. Beland said the email indicated that the final plans for the railway stations must be provided to NYSDOT no later than September 1, 2007 in order to avoid a loss of the funds.

In order to meet this deadline, Mr. Beland said that it was necessary to contract with Clough, Harbour & Associates for the final design of the stations. He advised that the cost of the final design would be \$355,000 and a resolution request was included in the agenda to serve this purpose. Mr. Beland noted that a meeting had been held recently with Clough, Harbour & Associates to discuss the plans for the railway stations. He said that they had estimated \$2 million to build two railway stations, including parking lots and landscaping. Mr. Beland said

that the main purpose of the meeting had been to scale down the project to meet the \$1 million remaining funds. He explained that the main costs removed from the plan were for landscaping and other such unnecessary facets. Mr. Beland stated that if additional grant funding could be obtained in the future, these items could be returned to the project.

Mr. Merlino stated that it would be difficult to convince his constituents, the majority of whom are the working middle class, that it was in their best interest to support the production of a railway station which would cost upwards of \$1 million.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to authorize supplemental agreement #2 with Clough, Harbour & Associates, in the amount of \$355,000, for final design PIN#1755.99 (H890-220) Railway Stations contingent upon NYSDOT concurrence. A copy of the resolution request is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the November Board Meeting. *(Subsequent to the meeting Mr. Beland advised that the amount of the agreement listed on his request was incorrect. The total dollar amount involved should have been \$350,000.)*

Mr. Caimano entered the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Mr. Beland apprised that the final item of his agenda pertained to the monthly meeting scheduled for the Committee. He noted that Mrs. Sady was attempting to re-align the meeting schedules to make them more accommodating for the Committee members and he asked for their input on the subject. William Lamy, DPW Superintendent, stated that he intended to schedule his meetings to accommodate the Supervisors traveling the furthest distance and he suggested that Mr. Beland's meetings be scheduled in the same manner.

Discussion ensued with respect to the Committee meeting schedule.

Mr. Stec reminded the Committee that permission had been received from the City of Glens Falls for the snowmobile clubs to utilize the trail located on West Mountain Road. He noted that at the bottom of the trail in front of the gate there was a large pile of dirt inhibiting the groomer from maintaining the trail. Mr. Stec suggested that either the City of Glens Falls be called to remove the pile or a DPW crew be dispatched with machinery to resolve the issue. Mr. Haskell asked Mr. Lamy to dispatch the proper personnel to remove the obstacle as per Mr. Stec's request. Mr. Lamy asked if permission was needed to do this and Mr. Stec replied that permission had been given by the City of Glens Falls, in resolution form, for Warren County to utilize the trails for their snowmobile clubs. Mr. Lamy assured Mr. Haskell that the matter would be taken care of.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Beland apprised the Committee that he had received a request from the City of Glens Falls Recreation Department to assist them in brushing out their cross-country ski trails. He noted that this was a fairly simple process which would only require their driving the brush-hog machinery through the trails to groom them.

The Committee consented and Mr. Beland was given permission to assist the City of Glens Falls Recreation Department in grooming their cross-county ski trails.

Mr. Stec stated that he had received a request from Mayor LeRoy Akins, of the City of Glens Falls, for help in clearing property recently acquired by the City. He said that the property was associated with the Coles Woods Trails and may require more than just the clearing of existing trails. Mr. Stec suggested that a crew be dispatched to the location to determine the extent of the work prior to promising assistance.

Mr. Thomas and Mr. VanNess left the meeting at 1:52 p.m.

Mr. Beland said that the brush hog attachment used for this type of work was effective and fairly quick, probably requiring only one half-day of work depending on the extent of the growth. Mr. Haskell stated that he was not opposed to this action providing the work was being done on City property. As the Committee consented, Mr. Beland agreed that he would visit the site to review the extent of the work involved in clearing the property.

Mr. Beland reminded the Committee that two work snowmobiles had been purchased and a grooming attachment was built for cross country ski trails. He noted that they currently groomed trails in the Town of Hague and he was sure that they would receive calls from the City of Glens Falls requesting assistance in this area. Mr. Beland stated that if there was no objection from the Committee they would do their best to help in all areas.

Mr. Merlino noted that only eleven days notice was given when the train came to the Hadley Railway Station and he thanked Mr. Beland and the other Warren County staff who erected the ramp for boarding of the train on such short notice. Mr. Haskell agreed that Warren County had an impressive group of individuals in their employ.

Mr. Beland noted that on the prior Saturday, Up Yonda Farm had their annual Halloween Trail which was attended by 420 people. He estimated that if the weather had been better they would have seen upwards of 1,000 attendees.

Mr. Haskell stated that in a prior meeting the Committee had authorized an RFP (Request for Proposal) to hire a Forester to determine the value of timber available for logging on Warren County property. He asked Mr. Beland if he was aware of the status of this request and Mr. Beland replied in the negative. Mr. Haskell advised that the logging of Warren County property was revenue that should be taken advantage of.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. F. Thomas advised the Committee that he had received a letter from Andy Sprague of Cornell Cooperative Extension. He explained that in the letter, Mr. Sprague asked for permission to apply for a \$32,500 grant for improvement of Agricultural Fairgrounds from New York State. Mr. F. Thomas noted that the deadline for the application was March 30, 2007. Mr. Haskell asked who would apply for the grant and Mr. F. Thomas replied that the Extension Services Department would complete the application. Mr. Beland noted that he had received the information on the grant and advised that there was only \$3 million available State-wide and the potential uses of the funds had to be described in the grant application.

Mr. Haskell said that the application should be completed and if necessary the Planning and Community Development Department could assist with the grant application. Mr. Belden suggested that once the application was complete it should be passed through the Planning

Department for verification.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the grant should be sought and therefore permission was given for Mr. Sprague and/or the Planning Department to complete the proper grant paperwork.

As there was no further business to come before the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist